

Testimony for HB 638
Brittney Morris

Good afternoon Chairman Sinrud, members of the committee. My name is Brittney Morris. <spell name> and I am the clinic manager for Planned Parenthood of Montana in Great Falls. I am here today in support of HB 638, which would provide the additional funding family planning clinics need in order to continue providing services.

In 2006 the Great Falls Planned Parenthood served approximately 2400 clients and a large majority of clients seeking family planning services are uninsured or underinsured. 1/3 of our clients served in Great Falls live at the poverty level.

Family planning clinics have seen an increase in costs mainly from pharmaceutical companies. In 2006 Ortho-McNeil Pharmaceutical drastically raised the prices that family planning clinics pay for their contraceptive products. This increase means that family planning clinics could face up to an 80% increase in costs for contraceptive supplies. Passage of this bill would help offset the effect of this increase thus enabling us to pass on the savings to our clients.

Without state funding for family planning, this price increase will drastically affect the services offered at family planning clinics in Montana. Clinics will be forced to cut costs in other areas and raise prices for other services thus putting a greater burden on those least able to afford it.

Access to family planning is vital in the Great Falls community because so many men, women and families count on us to provide services at an affordable level. It is not uncommon to hear comments from clients such as:

"I am so thankful your clinic is here to provide services, I not sure what I would do without your clinic."

and

"I have been coming to this clinic since I was 17 and I wouldn't consider being seen anywhere else"

People in our communities rely heavily on our services. These services include: birth control, cervical and breast cancer screenings, and pregnancy tests. It's important to note that this funding is not allocated for abortion services. In fact, funding family planning programs prevent the need for abortion by preventing unplanned pregnancies.

In conclusion, I strongly urge you to approve the passage of HB 638. Thank-you